**EXTRA! Ideas for Adults – Set Apart: A Life Lived for God – Session 6**

**Date: August 20, 2023**

**Set Apart for the Journey**

**The Point: Growing in Christ is a lifelong journey.**

**Get Into the Study**

*As you recap the content in “The Bible Meets Life,” share the following.*

Sometimes the most valuable projects in life take the longest time. That’s true for space exploration, which explains why NASA officials felt disheartened in July when they lost contact with a 46-year-old spacecraft exploring the landscape 12.3 billion miles from Earth. Voyager 2 launched in 1977 and passed Uranus, the last planet of our solar system, in 2018. It has discovered 16 new moons, six new planetary rings, and Neptune’s “Great Dark Spot”—a huge spinning storm about the size of Earth.

But on July 21, incorrect commands sent from Earth caused Voyager 2’s antenna to point two degrees away from our planet, resulting in loss of communication. Scientists detected a signal from the spacecraft two weeks later and attempted to send it new commands. If those efforts fail, Voyager 2 is programmed to reposition its antenna toward Earth automatically in October.

“That is a long time to wait, so (we) will try sending up commands several times prior to that date,” said Suzanne Dodd, Voyager 2’s project manager. She is not certain, however, that the spacecraft will be able to reconnect with scientists on Earth anytime soon.

For the scientists, Voyager 2’s long-term faithfulness in space exploration makes it too valuable to lose. Similarly for believers, long-term faithfulness to Christ is too valuable an accomplishment not to pursue.

* <https://www.npr.org/2023/08/02/1191341035/nasa-voyager-2-spacecraft-contact>
* <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/01/world/voyager-2-communication-blackout-scn/index.html>

**Get Into the Study [Option from both the Young Adult Leader Guide and the Daily Discipleship Guide]**

Play [this song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NswPPVgMaPE) to introduce the group to the session and the concept that growing in Christ takes a lifetime, but it’s worth it. The song will highlight the reality that becoming mature, complete Christians doesn’t happen overnight. Instead of our goal being some form of instant maturity, our focus should be on how we walk out the journey.

**Study the Bible**

*Share the following after discussing Question 3.*

Mature believers help guide others in all walks of life. The international mission field illustrates this reality. In May, the International Mission Board (IMB) honored 45 retiring missionaries who convened to celebrate the ways God used them to assist the spiritual journeys of others.

Among them, Paul and Robin Tinley retired for the second time from service in South America. They served in Venezuela for years, then came out of retirement to help with refugee ministry along the border between Venezuela and Colombia. Once, Robin removed her shoes and gave them to a needy refugee. When Michelle Chitwood, wife of the IMB’s president, saw that gesture, she said, “This is what a missionary looks like.”

Another IMB missionary couple, Russell and Melinda Kyzar, have come out of retirement to help younger missionaries acclimate to their new culture. Stationed in Puebla, Mexico, the Kyzars are on a short-term assignment guiding new arrivals in the Americas through culture shock and home sickness. Not only do they help younger missionaries navigate grocery shopping and public transportation, they also help new workers plug into local churches.

IMB President Paul Chitwood referred to the retiring missionaries by saying, “The bar has been set.” In your walk of life too, you can set the bar for other believers and encourage them through a faithful Christian example.

* <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/retiring-imb-missionaries-encourage-more-to-answer-call-to-reach-lost/>
* <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/retired-imb-couple-uses-decades-of-experience-to-mentor/>

*This week’s writer for Extra is David Roach. David is pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Saraland, Alabama. He and his wife Erin have three children.*

**Study the Bible [Option from Adult Leader Guide, p. 132]**

Help your group connect with the idea of straining for the goal by [playing this clip](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9aq-O1CczA&ab_channel=rayhweb) from the end of an Olympic race. Compare to the Christian journey.

**Study the Bible [Option from Young Adult Leader Guide]**

Play [this song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NswPPVgMaPE) to introduce the group to the session and the concept that growing in Christ takes a lifetime, but it’s worth it. The song will highlight the reality that becoming mature, complete Christians doesn’t happen overnight. Instead of our goal being some form of instant maturity, our focus should be on how we walk out the journey.

**Additional Questions**

**Icebreaker**

* What was it like when your kids had a significant growth spurt?
* What’s a fun fact from your family ancestry?
* What is the longest project you’ve worked on?
* When have you seen attention to detail pay off?
* When has a completed project proved to be worth the wait?

**Philippians 3:12-14**

* How would you describe Paul’s journey toward perfection?
* How do you decide what you should remember and what you should forget in your Christian journey?
* What’s our role and what’s God’s role in our sanctification process?
* What are some things that we should forget as we press forward in the race for the prize in discipleship?
* How would you define the ultimate goal of your spiritual journey?
* How does viewing sanctification as a journey instead of a destination help us understand discipleship?

**Philippians 3:15-19**

* How would you define spiritual maturity?
* Who are some Christians you look up to? Why?
* What marks a spiritually mature believer?
* In what ways has the example of mature believers helped you in your spiritual journey?
* What have you learned from the example of more mature believers?

**Philippians 3:20-21**

* How can knowing that our citizenship is in heaven encourage us in this life?
* How do we balance living as citizens of this kingdom as well as the next?
* How can believers focus on their “heavenly citizenship?”
* How does our citizenship in heaven affect the way we live now?

**For Those in Your Group**

Send the following link to your group members as either a teaser before the group meets or as a follow-up thought:

[Keep Climbing: The Journey is Worth It](https://lynnhpryor.com/2023/08/07/keep-climbing-the-journey-is-worth-it/)